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INFO RUEHPH/CDC ATLANTA GA  
RUEAUSA/DEPT OF HHS WASHINGTON DC  
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 1754  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC  
RUEHRC/DEPT OF AGRICULTURE WASHINGTON DC  
RUCNASE/ASEAN MEMBER COLLECTIVE  
RUEHZN/ENVIRONMENT SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY COLLECTIVE

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SENSITIVE  
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STATE FOR CA/OCS/EAP  
STATE FOR M/PRI FOR RMORRITZ  
STATE FOR S/ES-O/CMS FOR EPARRA  
STATE FOR EAP/MTS FOR DBISCHOF  
STATE FOR OES/AIAG FOR AMBASSADOR LOFTIS, DWINN AND  
CPATTERSON  
STATE FOR REO/BKK FOR HHOWARD  
STATE FOR OES/IHB, AAIT, MED  
HHS FOR OGHA STEIGER AND HICKEY  
CDC ATLANTA FOR CCID AND COGH  
USDA FOR APHIS

E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [KFLU](#) [AEMR](#) [ASEC](#) [AMED](#) [CASC](#) [KFLO](#) [TBIO](#) [KSAF](#) [KPAO](#) [PREL](#)  
PINR, AMGT, TF, MY  
SUBJECT: MALAYSIA H1N1 UPDATE - July 29, 2009

11. (SBU) SUMMARY: The Malaysian Ministry of Health reported the third and fourth Influenza A (H1N1) related deaths on July 29. These deaths both involve local transmission of H1N1. The total number of locally transmitted cases now exceeds the number of imported cases. In the first three cases, the individuals were treated at private hospitals and clinics and were not tested or treated for H1N1 for at least several days after showing some symptoms. In the fourth and most recent death, a 20 year old woman was treated at a MOH hospital but she did not report any symptoms until 11 days after onset. Minister of Health Liow Tiong Lai has expressed his concern and "discomfort" with the worsening situation and has called on private hospital to be more vigilant with regard to H1N1 surveillance and treatment. Malaysia continues to define its mitigation approach and MOH has announced they will preorder the H1N1 vaccine. END SUMMARY.

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H1N1 Deaths  
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12. (SBU) The fourth and most recent H1N1 related death in Malaysia was reported on July 29. A 20 year old woman sought treatment at a MOH hospital in Malacca on July 26, reportedly 11 days after she began experiencing symptoms. Her condition worsened on July 27 and she was tested for H1N1. She passed away on July 28 before the results of the test were known. MOH reported that the individual was obese.

13. (SBU) MOH reported on July 29 that a 42 year old Malaysian man had died from H1N1 related causes on July 27. He reported to a private clinic on July 6 with flu-like symptoms but was not referred to the hospital until July 18. The man was treated for 10 days in a private hospital and developed pneumonia. The hospital did not perform a throat swab to test for H1N1 until July 22. The individual reportedly was infected locally and not overseas, making this the first death involving local transmission. Health Minister Liow Tiong Lai expressed concern that the individual was not treated for H1N1 early enough; like the prior two deaths, he was not treated at a MOH designated hospital and flu-like symptoms were reported several days before any H1N1 tests or treatments were performed. He

urged private clinics and hospitals to be more vigilant.

¶4. (SBU) Malaysia's second H1N1 related death involves a 46 year old Malaysian man who passed away on July 26 after testing positive for H1N1. He reportedly traveled to Langkawi with his family on July 13 where he developed flu-like symptoms, although MOH suspects he may have encountered the disease while traveling in Europe. The man went to a private hospital in the Kuala Lumpur area on July 16 and was given a chest x-ray, which showed pneumonia. He was admitted to the ICU of a different private hospital on July 19. MOH confirmed he was positive for H1N1 on July 22 and he died four days later. It is unclear why he was not tested sooner and at what point, if ever, he received antiviral treatment. MOH did not disclose any complicating preconditions about the victim, something they were quick to do with the first death case.

¶5. (SBU) Malaysia's first H1N1-related death was reported on July 24. A 30 year old Indonesian student entered Malaysia on July 5 with flu-like symptoms. He reportedly fainted at a private medical facility while waiting for medication on July 21 and died that same day. Minister of Health Liow Tiong Lai stated, "Influenza A (H1N1) was not a direct cause of his death" and described the individual as obese with a heart condition.

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Clusters of H1N1  
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¶6. (SBU) Malaysia reported a total of 1219 confirmed cases from the start of the pandemic until July 28. MOH has not estimated how many H1N1 cases may be positive but not reported. MOH reports that approximately 53% of these cases were locally transmitted. Local

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transmission has far outpaced imported cases in the last two weeks. Liow had previously stated on July 27 that the situation in Malaysia was confined mostly to clusters of infection with a few isolated cases with limited community transmission. The latest death prompted a much more grim assessment from Liow. He stated that there were 95 new cases of local transmission in the last 24 hours with 19 new clusters of infection. However, MOH has reported that almost 98% of all confirmed cases have already fully recovered.

¶7. (SBU) MOH has publicly adopted a mitigation approach after slowly transitioning from a strict containment policy. This means that some surveillance measures have relaxed. Airport screening has loosened with health declaration cards still being distributed but ESTHoff observed that the cards are often not collected. The cards primarily served to help health screeners identify if passengers had traveled to countries with local transmission of H1N1. This information is no longer helpful now that Malaysia and all of its major transit points meet that criterion.

¶8. (SBU) While MOH has shifted away from a containment strategy, this message still has not completely filtered down, leaving some inconsistent implementation. The Ministry of Education (MOE) issued guidance on July 17 requiring all schools to form a special unit for H1N1 monitoring. This MOE circular asked all schools to require students traveling back to Malaysia from overseas to receive a medical certificate of good health before returning to class. This requirement does not apply to students already in Malaysia. This guidance supersedes the previous instruction that all students returning from overseas must undergo seven days of home quarantine prior to returning to class regardless of whether or not they exhibit any symptoms. However, MOH Principal Assistant Director for Infectious Disease Control Dr. Devan Ramu has stated this policy is outdated even though MOE has not said so. Until MOE clarification is received the International School of Kuala Lumpur (ISKL) will follow the July 17 protocol and the Embassy will set up additional hours in the medical unit to examine Embassy children returning from summer vacation or other travel.

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Flu Vaccine  
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19. (SBU) MOH confirmed on July 15 that it would place orders for the H1N1 vaccine. Once the vaccine is available, MOH plans to vaccinate the 200,000 "frontliners" first, including police, health, and immigration officers.

KEITH